1. No subject

THE WOODLAWN SERIES.

Bertie and the Carpenters:

OR,

THE WAY TO BE HAPPY.

BY

MRS MADELINE LESLIE.

AUTHOR OF "AUNT HATTIE'S LIBRARY FOR BOYS AND GIRLS," ETC.

CHICAGO:
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1880.

TO

HARRY, NELLIE, AND WILLIE SAMPSON;

ALSO,

To the Memory of their Deceased Brothers and Sister,

BERTIE, FRANKEY AND EMMA,

THESE LITTLE BOOKS ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

If the perusal prompt them and other readers to imitate the virtues of our hero in his efforts to *be* good, and to *do* good, the wishes of the author will be realized.

BERTIE; OR, THE WOODLAWN SERIES.

BY MRS. MADELINE LESLIE.

16mo. 6 vols., Illustrated.

I. BERTIE'S HOME.

II. BERTIE AND THE CARPENTERS.

III. BERTIE AND THE MASONS.

IV. BERTIE AND THE PLUMBERS.

V. BERTIE AND THE PAINTERS.

VI. BERTIE AND THE GARDENERS.

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Bertie and the Carpenters.

CHAPTER I.

BERTIE'S PAPA.

IN another book I have told you about Herbert Curtis and his sister, Winifred, a dear little, brown-eyed girl whom everybody loved. I have told you, too, about the kind papa and mamma who were so anxious that their chil-

dren should grow up to be useful and therefore happy.

Mr. Curtis was building a new house, at a place called Woodlawn. It was near a lovely lake which the lady named Shawsheen, from an old Indian chief. It was some distance from the house of the good farmer's, where they were boarding; and as Mr. Curtis wished his son to learn all the process of building a house, he had purchased him a donkey and small carriage in which he could ride back and forth.

The name of the donkey was Whitefoot. Mamma soon found he was a very useful beast, even to her. He was so docile and obedient that she felt perfectly safe to trust Bertie and Winifred to ride all about the town.

Sometimes when papa was engaged giving orders to his men, or when he had taken a hurried trip to the city, to see after his business there, mamma allowed her son to drive her to the different cottages, where her poor people lived.

Mr. Curtis was very rich. In the city, where he had always resided until he found the pretty village of Oxford, there was an immense store close by the wharf. Over the door was a sign-board, near fifty years old, on which was painted the names, "CURTIS, DALRYMPLE & Co."

The Curtis who had then owned part of the famous old store, was not Lawrence Curtis, Bertie's papa, but Lawrence Curtis, uncle to the boy's father, for whom he was named.

Bertie's grandpa lived on a large

farm in the country; and when Mr. Lawrence Curtis was a boy, he used to have great flocks of hens of his own, and a large ram, which was the terror of all the children in town. He was a boy who observed everything that passed around him; and therefore knew much about country life which many persons brought up in the city are ignorant of.

When he was fifteen years old he was left an orphan. His oldest brother took the farm, paying the other heirs what was due on their

share. Lawrence went at once, as had been agreed before his father's death, to live with his uncle in the city, and learn to be a merchant. In time he became a partner, then his uncle resigned, and he took his place in the firm. The old names, Curtis, Dalrymple & Co., still remained; for merchants had learned greatly to respect those signatures; and Lawrence Curtis, Junior, would have cut off his right hand before he would have signed the old names to any transaction that was not strictly honorable.

When the young merchant reached his twenty-fourth year, he thought himself abundantly able to support a family of his own. He had long before chosen a mate, a young lady named Cecilia Manning, whose lovely Christian character seemed to him convincing proof that she would make his home happy.

For a few years, at his uncle's earnest request, they all lived together; and when the old gentleman died the young Lawrence succeeded to all his wealth.

Mr. Lawrence Curtis, whom the people in Oxford called, "the Squire," was now in his thirty-sixth year. Though he had resolved, on account of the health of his wife, to reside in Oxford, yet he did not intend wholly to give up business. There were old clerks well trained to every department who had been in the store longer than he had, and to these, under the superintendence of Mr. Dalrymple, son of the old partner, he felt it was safe to entrust the care of the shipping for the present.

In the fall and winter he intended to pass one day in the course of every week in the city, in order to keep an oversight of the whole business.

Now after twenty years of labor among bales and boxes of goods, either just arrived from India, or just about to be sent there, he found the knowledge he had gained in early life of the greatest use to him. It was this, and the recollection of a copy he used to write when a lad at school, "Knowledge is power," that made

him so earnest in his resolve to give his son an opportunity to learn every useful art.

CHAPTER II.

THE PICNIC.

IT was the habit of Bertie, as I have already stated in another book of this series, soon after he had read his morning portion of Scripture with his mamma, to harness Whitefoot into his donkey carriage and ride away to Woodlawn. Sometimes he drove his father there, or Winnie went for an hour or two;

but usually he rode off from the farm by himself.

But Bertie was not a selfish boy, he delighted to give others pleasure; so it happened that after a few weeks, almost every boy and girl in Oxford, had enjoyed a ride in the funny carriage drawn by the funny, long-eared Whitefoot.

It was now the season for berries; and the children of the village improved the long vacation in picking them for the market. In this way they earned shoes and warm clothes

for the coming winter, or helped their parents provide necessary food for the family.

Mrs. Curtis was extremely fond of berries. She liked all kinds; but blackberries and raspberries, which grew wild and very abundantly around Oxford, suited her best. She proved a great blessing to the little folks during those long, hot days, by purchasing the berries, instead of their being obliged to carry them a mile and a half to the man who sent them to the market in the city.

Mrs. Grant, the farmer's wife, had by this time become so much attached to Mr. Curtis' whole family that she was pleased with an opportunity to do anything for their comfort. So when Mrs. Curtis asked her who could make some of her berries into sweetmeats, she answered, —

"I will make them for you, and welcome."

Many times when Bertie was returning with Whitefoot from Woodlawn to the farm, he overtook some of the tired children and gave them

a lift, as they called it, to their homes. Or if there were too many of them; and he didn't like to take one and leave the rest, he would laughingly tell them to put all their baskets or pails into the carriage, and then he would go out of his way for a mile to carry their heavy load.

One day when Mrs. Curtis felt stronger than usual, there was a grand berry party from the farm; Mr. Grant harnessed two of his stout horses into his hay rigging, which he had fitted for the occasion. First, he

had taken out all the high stakes which kept the hay in, except those in the corners, and across the top of these he had stretched a wide piece of cloth to keep the sun from beating on their heads. Then he set in four chairs for Mr. and Mrs. Curtis, his wife, and his mother, who was making them a visit. For the young people, among whom he laughingly counted himself, he provided seats by placing boards from one side of the wide cart to the other.

There were twelve in all, for of

course Bertie and Winifred must go, and Nancy with them; and there were Esther and Mrs. Grant's little niece Susan (who was a visitor), and the house-maid beside.

I cannot stop to tell you much about the fine fun they enjoyed. Mrs. Curtis was not well enough to wander around, and her husband made a nice seat for her on the grass by spreading down large shawls. He brought her bushes loaded with berries, while Winnie gathered for her some wild flowers.

At noon they had a famous lunch under the trees. Mr. Curtis laughed heartily when he saw Mrs. Grant and Esther take one basket after another from their places under the seats of the hay-rigging.

"I should think," he said, "you were intending to provide for an army."

There was boiled ham and spring chickens, and delicious bread cut in the thinnest of slices ready to spread with some of the new butter that morning taken from the churn. There

were piles of the delicate raspberry puffs of which they were all so fond, baskets heaped with doughnuts and sage-cheese to eat with them; and there was a large jug filled with rich milk.

When they had finished, Mrs. Grant pointed to Mrs. Curtis' notice the number of empty plates, saying with a smile, "I have been to berry picnics before, and I know how much twelve hungry people can dispose of."

Toward night the party returned home, rather weary, to be sure, but

delighted with the pleasure they had enjoyed, and carrying with them more than twenty quarts of berries, to be made into puddings, berry cakes, and puffs.

CHAPTER III.

THE MASTER-BUILDER.

BUT I have delayed too long telling you about the new house. One day, on arriving at Woodlawn, Bertie gazed about him in amazement. Everything looked so strange that he could scarcely believe it was the same place which he had left only the previous day.

On the green at the side of the

cellar were piles and piles of lumber, upon which men, whom he had never seen before, were working. There was a gentleman too, very pleasant and intelligent, with whom his papa was talking earnestly, every now and then pointing to the lumber and then referring to a book in his hand.

Bertie felt rather shy among so many strangers. At first he resolved to go on to the lake where his old friends Tom and Jim were working with the oxen; but he wanted very much to learn about the carpenter's

work, as he had done about the stone-masons; so he unharnessed Whitefoot as usual, and turned him into the pasture, and then walked around to the place where his papa stood.

Mr. Curtis was so busily engaged in talking, that not until he felt his son's hand stealing softly into his, did he notice that the boy had arrived.

"This is Herbert, my only son," he said, addressing the gentleman; "and this is Mr. Fuller, the master-builder."

"Are they cutting out the house now, sir?" inquired Bertie, pointing to the men.

The gentlemen both laughed, and Mr. Fuller answered, "Yes, sonny, they are cutting it out; or as we call it, they are framing the building."

"Will you please tell me how you fasten it on to the underpinning? I shouldn't think nails would go into the stone."

"I will explain first," said Mr. Curtis, smiling, "that as it is Bertie's vacation, I have given him liberty to

come to Woodlawn every morning, and find out all he can about building a house. He is a perfect Yankee in the art of questioning, and has already, by close observation, gained a pretty good idea of the manner in which the cellar is prepared, by the stone-masons; to-morrow he will see the underpinning set up, and then he will be ready for the carpenters. I have a theory about educating children which I am anxious to test. Now he is impatient for your reply."

"I have a boy of my own," said

Mr. Fuller, placing his hand kindly on Bertie's shoulder. "He asks all sorts of questions. Sometimes I answer them and sometimes I tell him he may find out for himself. Which way would suit you best?"

"I had rather find out by myself if I can," was Bertie's earnest answer, his clear blue eyes looking right into the gentleman's.

"May I go and see the men, sir?" he added, presently.

"Yes, I will go with you, and tell them who you are."

"And be very careful not to be in their way," added papa.

"Yes, sir; but where are the stone-masons?"

"At the other end of the place. Alick is at work on the wall. When the Irishmen have finished digging the trench, they will commence on the barn cellar; and then Alick will build a wall there larger than that in the house cellar."

Bertie held Mr. Fuller's hand very tightly while they walked toward the men. He blushed when the master-

builder told them that the boy wished to learn all he could, by seeing them work.

Mr. Fuller then went with Mr. Curtis to another pile of lumber, where they measured a good many of the pieces with a rule the builder took from his pocket; and Bertie thought he would follow them. But just as he was turning to go, one of the carpenters glanced up at him with so pleasant a smile, he felt acquainted at once.

The young man was sitting on a

thick piece of wood, and in his hand he had an instrument which he kept turning and turning about.

"What are you doing to that wood?" Bertie found courage to ask.

"It is a piece of lumber for the frame of the house, and I am making holes in it with an auger. Look, it is a kind of large gimlet."

"Oh, I see! I see!" exclaimed the boy, his whole face lighting up, "I thank you, sir."

"You're very welcome," said the man, laughing, as he moved along,

and began to bore another hole. "It's a good deal easier for me to talk, than it is to keep my tongue still."

"That's so!" exclaimed an older man close beside him; and then they both laughed heartily, though they didn't stop a moment from their work.

CHAPTER IV.

BERTIE TRYING TO BE USEFUL.

O you put nails in those holes to fasten the frame together?" asked Bertie.

"Oh, no!" answered the young man, whose name was Joseph; "nails would grow rusty. We pin them together with white oak pins. There is a keg full behind you; when

they are opened you will see how nicely they fit."

"And do you know exactly where to make the holes?"

"We know by measuring. It is pretty nice work, though; Mr. Fuller has drawings of every piece of timber in the frame."

"Oh, yes! They are with Mr. Rand's specifications."

"That's a big word for such a little fellow," said the older man, who was Joseph's father, "how did you happen to learn it?"

"Why mamma told the architect what kind of a house she wanted, because she didn't like any of the plans he brought in his portfolio; and then he wrote it all down. Mamma explained to me what an architect does, and what specifications are. I suppose you work by a framing plan."

"Yes," Joe answered. "When Mr. Fuller bought the lumber at the great lumber-yard, I went with him. First he made a bargain with the owner how much the best of spruce timber would cost a thousand feet.

Then when that was agreed upon, we went to the yard and the boss picked out all the pieces he wanted for the frame."

"What is a boss?" inquired Bertie.

"A boss? why he is Mr. Fuller."

"Is it a wicked word?" asked the boy, timidly. "Would he like to have you call him so?"

Joe and his father and another carpenter, who was close by, threw back their heads, and ha' ha'd till the sound echoed back from the high grassy mound.

Bertie looked very rosy. He wondered a good deal what they were laughing at, but presently Joe answered.

"Of course he likes it. Every body calls him so. It means that he's the head man. There'll be some brick-masons here, by-and-by, and some plasterers, and some painters, and each of 'em will have a boss, who tells the rest what to do. I'm going to be a boss myself, when I'm a few years older."

"Are you?" exclaimed Bertie,

"I'm very glad. Will you please tell me what Mr. Fuller did next?"

"Yes, if you'll wait till father and I have measured another sill, I've got the holes all bored in this, ready for him to make the mortises."

"Is that a sill? I thought you said it was a spruce timber."

"So it is. It measures eight inches by eight, which is a good deal larger than many people have; but they say Mr. Curtis wants his house built in the most thorough manner; and as he is willing to pay well, Mr. Fuller

picked out the very best wood in the lumber-yard without regard to price. Well, this piece is called a sill. It lies on the top of the underpinning, and of course ought to be very strong."

"Oh!" exclaimed Bertie, eagerly, "I didn't know those were called sills. When shall you fasten them on?"

"We never fasten them on. We only lay them on the underpinning, and the house is so heavy, it keeps them firm."

"I thought they were nailed on; but I thank you for telling me about it."

"It's shockingly hot here!" exclaimed one of the carpenters, unbuttoning his vest and throwing it behind him on the green turf. "I'd give a good deal for a glass of ice-water."

"I know where there is some very cool water," said Bertie. "It comes right out of the hill; mamma says it's delicious. If I had a pail, I'd get you some in a minute."

"I've a tin cup somewhere," said

the man, "but I don't want to trouble you to fill it."

Bertie took the cup and ran off, his face beaming with pleasure. It was scarcely two minutes before he returned, bringing the tin very carefully so as not to spill the cool water.

"It's better than ice-water, no mistake now," said the man offering his companion a share. "I'm very much obliged, Master Curtis."

"Don't you want some?" Bertie asked Joe.

"Why I can't say no, for my mouth

is all parched up; but I don't want you to be running back and forth to wait on me, perhaps your ma wouldn't like it."

"Let him wait on himself," said his father, laughing. "If he wouldn't talk so much he'd be all right."

"I like to hear him talk," urged the boy; "and I'll go with pleasure. Mamma wants me to be kind and obliging to every body. She says that's the way little boys can show they love God. I wish I had a pail, then I could bring a good deal."

"Will a pitcher do?" asked Joe.

"Oh, yes!"

He brought enough this time to give all of them a treat, for which they returned many thanks. After the pitcher had been emptied, Bertie walked slowly round among the men who were all measuring the pieces of joist and boring holes, and then returned to his old place near Joe and his father.

"I guess your mother is a pretty nice kind of a lady," said the young man, wiping the large drops of per-

spiration from his forehead with the back of his hand.

"She is! she is!" exclaimed Bertie. "I wish you knew her. She rides here almost every day with papa; and I'll introduce you to her."

"I'm not used to being introduced to such grand ladies," explained Joe, blushing; "and I shouldn't know what to say."

"But she talks with all the men. She makes them feel right off how much she wants to do them good She goes every week to see the black-

smith's sick daughter, and carries her nice fruit. That's the reason she didn't want high turrets on the house because she said the people here would think we were too grand, and they wouldn't come to see her."

CHAPTER V.

BERTIE'S FRIEND JOE.

"HY, Bertie! what are you talking about?" asked papa, coming up behind him, and laying his hand on the boy's head.

"Isn't mamma the best woman that ever lived?" Bertie asked suddenly, quite confident of his father's opinion.

"I am glad her son thinks so," remarked the gentleman laughing; "but I thought you were learning how to make a house."

"He's been doing that, sir," said Mr. Allen, Joe's father, "and something else too, according to my mind. He's been obeying the fifth command, sir, and honored his mother. He's a fine lad; and I feel sure he'll be a comfort to both his parents."

"I'm glad to hear that, Bertie," said Mr. Curtis, gazing tenderly in his son's flushed face.

"Oh, what makes you spoil all the nice holes, sir?" inquired Bertie, suddenly. "I thought the oak pegs were to go into them."

Mr. Allen smiled as he said, "Come up a little nearer, and I will try to explain. You see Joe has made these holes close together, in each of those pieces. Those are only to break up the wood and make it ready for me to cut out the piece with my chisel. It is very easy with this sharp instrument to cut right through the holes, and make mortises, as they are

called, large enough to put in the tenons, which are on the end of joists and posts.

"Perhaps your father will go with you to the men over there who are making the tenons on the upright pieces; and you will see how nicely they are arranged to fit in. Then holes are made the other way of the timber, to fasten them together with the pegs."

Mr. Curtis not only went to see the other men, but brought a piece of joist in which the tenon was made,

and shewed Bertie how exactly it fitted into the mortise. The kegs containing the pegs were not yet open; but he took a lead pencil from his pocket, and pushed it through the hole, so that the boy could see that it would be very tight and firm, when it was done.

In the evening Mr. Curtis was much pleased to hear Bertie explaining to Mrs. Taylor how a house was framed. He took his jacknife from his pocket, one blade of which was rather loose, and pulling out the

small pin which held it together, said earnestly, —

"Now, Mrs. Taylor, this knife is the sill that lies on the underpinning, and the blade is the post which stands upright. This piece of iron which runs out from the end of the blade is the tenon. You see it has a little mite of a hole in it, and when the tenon is pushed into the mortise, the pin goes through this hole in the knife, and right through the blade, and that holds them firm."

"You have made it as plain as day-

light," the woman said, laughing. "You ought to be a professor, Bertie. You have such a faculty for making things clear. Now I've lived in a house all my life, and never thought before how it was put together."

"But you know how to make a great many nice things," exclaimed the child. "If I were a girl I should want to learn about cooking. But when I'm a man I shall need a house; and I shall watch everything to see whether it is right, as my father does."

It required several days to complete the frame. Bertie came to feel very well acquainted with the carpenters; but he liked Mr. Allen and Joseph better than all the others. No matter whether the weather was cloudy or pleasant, Joe's black eyes always sparkled with fun, and he was ready to greet Master Bertie with a smile. It was true that his tongue was running from morning till night, but he never used profane or vulgar words; nor did he make unkind remarks to his companions.

Mr. Fuller told Mr. Curtis that Joe was the smartest fellow in his whole gang of men; and that his good spirits acted like oil to smooth away all strife.

Every morning Bertie and his donkey were on hand; but when the little fellow had learned the names of all the different pieces of lumber, he used to go off with Tom to the lake, where the new road was getting on famously.

In the afternoon when the heat was not too great, he drove his mamma in

his donkey carriage and learned a great many useful lessons by hearing her talk with the poor people whom she went to visit.

Those little boys and girls who have read the first book about Bertie, will remember the visit the Squire made to the blacksmith, when he found out that Mr. Hunt's daughter was sick in bed. In the next chapter I shall tell you what great reason Lucy Hunt had to thank her heavenly Father who had sent Mr. Curtis' family to Oxford.

CHAPTER VI.

SUSY HUNT.

A FEW days after the Squire's visit to the blacksmith, mamma told Bertie at the dinner table that she should like to ride with him in the afternoon, if Whitefoot wasn't too frisky.

The reason she said this, was because the donkey was fed with so many oats, he began to shake his

head like a gay horse; and his father had just been telling him that the animal had such nice grass he didn't need any grain at all.

Bertie saw they were all laughing at him; but he answered good-naturedly, —

"I shall be happy to drive you anywhere, mamma. I think if Whitefoot is a little gay, I can manage him."

At three o'clock they set out, leaving Winnie in the garden with Nancy, filling a bowl with thimble-berries for tea.

It was only about half a mile to the blacksmith's, and they rode slowly on, talking about the day when they first came to Oxford, and how much pleasanter it was living here than in the city. By-and-by they came in sight of the old shop; and there was Mr. Hunt setting a tire in front of it.

"I've brought mamma to see your sick daughter," Bertie said, speaking very loud, so as to be heard above the strokes of the hammer.

"Walk right up to the house," Mr. Hunt answered. "I'm sorry I can't

stop; but if I do, my iron will grow cold."

Mrs. Hunt had seen them from the chamber window, and ran down to open the door. She was dressed in a short sack, which hung loosely from her throat, with a clean linsey-woolsey skirt, and looked as cool and neat as possible.

"Will you walk into the parlor?" she asked, "or will you go to Susy's room?"

"I want to see the little girl my husband told me about," Mrs. Curtis

answered cordially; and then they went up a very narrow flight of stairs to a room in the second story, which looked out upon the green fields, the lake and hills at a distance.

On a low cot or frame, which had hinges at the sides to raise the head and shoulders, lay, or rather sat, a young girl, her light gray eyes looking unnaturally large and bright in consequence of her thin, sunken cheeks. She did not look gloomy, but held out her hand with so bright a smile that it made her almost beautiful.

"I'm very glad to see you," she said to Bertie. "Father told me about your donkey, and since that he carried me to the window to see it. What funny ears it has!"

"I wish you were well. I would give you a ride in my carriage."

"Thank you, I hope I shall be well before winter. Father says I shall be if it's God's will. And now he's got almost money enough to send me to the doctor. I think it will be His will. Don't you?" addressing Mrs. Curtis, timidly.

"I hope so, indeed. Do you suffer much pain?"

"Sometimes I do. It is all in my back."

"She had a fall on the ice," explained her mother; "and when we thought she had got over it, she fell down in a swoon; and ever since she has had turns of dreadful suffering. Her father counts on the doctor's curing her. She's our all, as perhaps you know."

"How would you like to go to the hospital, Susy? The very best phy-

sicians in the country are there, and the nurses are extremely kind and attentive."

"Could mother be with me?"

"Yes, if it were necessary; but there are a great many little girls and boys staying there without their mothers. I saw one the last time I visited the hospital, propped up with pillows on her neat bed, playing with her dolls and looking as happy as possible. Her mother lived in the city, and used to visit her two or three times a week."

"What was the matter with her?" inquired Mrs. Hunt.

"She had broken her leg. She had, on a plate, two large oranges which had been given her, and the nurse promised she should play tea with them. Only she would have to send the pieces round to the other cots, as the little ones could not get up to come to her."

"Why, mamma?" inquired Bertie.

"Because they were all sick in bed, as she was. One little girl had burned her foot terribly, falling into

a kettle of boiling mush. Another, had hurt her head; but they could talk and laugh with each other across the large hall. As soon as they were pronounced well, they went home to leave room for other little girls to be cured."

"It's a great blessing, ma'am, to have such places for poor people," remarked Mrs. Hunt, sighing, as her eyes rested on Susy's eager face.

"My husband has a right to dispose of ten berths," added Mrs. Curtis. "If Susy is well enough to go,

and you think it best, he will obtain admittance for her."

"I thank you, ma'am. Wouldn't you like it, Susy?"

"All but leaving you, mother."

Susan's eyes were full of tears as she answered.

Mr. Hunt's heavy step was heard coming up the stairs, and his wife repeated what her visitor had said.

Mrs. Curtis was greatly affected to see with what tenderness the father laid his broad, muscular hand on his daughter's head.

"She's our all, and very precious to her parents, ma'am. We should like to keep her with us; but He who orders all things, will do what is best for her, and for us."

"I should like to have our skilful surgeons examine her case," suggested the lady. "Why not take her to the city at once? My husband will give you a note to the house surgeon, which will ensure you all necessary attention."

Mr. Hunt sat down and looked steadily in Susy's face, without speak-

ing. She put her hand in his, and he held it in a close grasp, while his wife gazed at both as if conscious that when he spoke, all would be settled.

"I must believe, ma'am, that God sent you here," at last the blacksmith said fervently. "I've thought it all over, and the sooner our little lamb is under the care of the surgeons, the better. If they say she's beyond cure, our Father above will help us to bear the stroke; and I believe he's fitted her to live or die, according to his will."

Without another word the man rose and left the room; but when he was in the entry, they heard him sob aloud.

CHAPTER VII.

THE INDIAN TOMAHAWKS.

ONE morning, before the frame of the house was ready for raising, Bertie asked his mamma to let him ride on Whitefoot's back to Woodlawn. There was a saddle in the carriage when it came, but he had never tried it.

Mamma thought at first he had better wait till his papa came home;

but when Mr. Taylor offered to buckle the girth that fastened the saddle on the donkey's back, and assured her that there could be no danger with such a docile creature, she consented.

Whitefoot seemed as much pleased at this new arrangement as his master did. He stood very quiet while everything was prepared, turning his head around to see when all was ready; and then, pricking up his long ears. started off.

Mamma and nurse stood at the

door watching him out of the gate, while Mr. and Mrs. Taylor were laughing on the door-step.

At first the motion frightened the little fellow; and he bent over the animal, ready to cling around his neck, but mamma called out,—

"Sit up straight, Bertie; there is no danger. Sit up, and keep your feet in the stirrups."

"I'm going to get off, mamma. I don't like this way," said the boy in a timid voice. "I had rather go in the carriage, the donkey joggles me so."

"Turn Whitefoot about, and ride here a minute."

"Now," she added, when he was opposite the door, "you see how very gentle he is. After you have been on his back a few moments, you will enjoy it much. When papa comes home, Winnie shall ride. Now sit up straight, like a brave boy, and let me see how nicely you can trot down the road."

Bertie looked earnestly in her face a moment, but seeing only smiles, he resolved to try once more. So, sit-

ting as erect as possible, he started off again, and this time he did not return. Before he had reached Woodlawn he was much delighted with the exercise.

When he came to the place where Joe and his father were at work, he stopped Whitefoot, and asked:

"Have you seen my papa here?"

"Yes," answered Joe, "Alick came for him just now; I think you'll find him where they are digging the barn cellar."

"Thank you."

"Call again when you come back," said the young man, "I've something to show you."

Bertie trotted on wondering he had not thought of this way of riding before, until he saw his papa standing with the Irishmen examining something he held in his hands.

"Hollo, Bertie!" he said, "how do you like donkey riding? You've come just in time to see a curiosity," and he held up what looked like an old piece of rusty iron.

"What is it, papa?" Bertie asked.

"It is an Indian tomahawk. It was dug up from the cellar. This may have been the very place where the Indians sat in council, and where they buried the hatchet, to show that they would keep peace with the white people."

"Oh, papa! may I carry it to mamma? She told me the other day about an old chief, who once lived here. He used to go and hear missionaries preach. Perhaps that was his tomahawk; and when he had learned how very wicked it was to use it

to kill people, perhaps he buried it there."

Mr. Curtis laughed as he took a stick and scraped off the loam from the iron. "Perhaps so," he answered.

"At any rate we 'll keep it as a relic of the past." He was turning away with the weapon in his hand, when the spade of one of the Irishmen struck something, and presently, another curiosity was secured. This was a piece of stone cut in the form of a tomahawk with a rude handle attached.

"I am glad we found them," said the Squire. "Mamma will like the place better than ever. She is always interested in the poor Indians."

Mr. Curtis wrapped the curiosities in a piece of newspaper he had in his pocket, and laid them away till he went home; then he followed Bertie to the lake.

The new road was progressing very fast now, for Tom and Jerry took the stone from a part of the old wall that was near them. The trench was dug for a long distance, and nearly filled

with stone. When that was finished, the barn cellar would be ready for them to draw out the gravel in the centre as they had done, at the house cellar. This would take more time, because instead of emptying the carts near by, they would have to go as far as the new road, and cover the stones with it.

"If they don't carry off the gravel at once," Mr. Curtis explained to Bertie, "they will have the labor of loading twice."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HOUSE-RAISING.

N his way back Bertie did not forget to ride up close to the place where Joe Allen was at work.

"Wait a minute," said Joe.

Presently he brought from under his coat, on the grass, a piece of wood which he held behind him,

while his eyes were dancing with fun.

"Did you ever see a windmill?" he asked.

"No, I never did."

"Well, I've made you one. You see I've never forgotten that nice cold water you brought me from the spring."

"Oh, Joseph, I'm very much obliged to you! I'll bring you water every day. Did you really make this for me? Mamma and Winnie will admire to see it."

"When the wind blows," explained Joseph, "it will whirl round like this," giving it a great puff with his breath. "I'm glad you like it. Now I must go back to my work."

"I like it dearly; and I thank you very much," answered the boy, letting the reins fell on Whitefoot's neck, and blowing with all his might, at which the little wheels flew round like a top.

"If it doesn't rain, we're going to raise, to-morrow;" said Joseph, walking away.

"To raise?" repeated Bertie, wondering.

"I mean to put up the frame of the house, and fasten it together with the white-oak pegs."

"Oh! oh, I'm so glad! I do hope it wont rain. Does it look as if it would be pleasant?"

"Yes, there's every appearance of fair weather."

"I forgot one thing; and I'm sorry," said Bertie, with a deep blush.

"What is that?"

Joe was helping his father measure with a rule, but looked up wondering what had changed the boy's tone so suddenly.

"Mamma says, we ought to wish the weather to be just what God sends. She told me about a man; his name was the Shepherd of Salisbury Plain, who didn't always have salt to eat with his potatoes; and whatever weather it was, he thought it was all right. I forgot that; but I guess it will be pleasant, don't you? and I shall ask Mrs. Taylor to give

me my breakfast very early, so that I can be here when you begin."

"We re going to lay on the sill and have the posts and timbers all ready this afternoon," said Mr. Allen. "We're just finishing off the last tenons, and then we shall be ready. Perhaps you'd like to see us do that."

"Thank you, I would very much, if mamma thinks it best for me to come back."

It was now almost noon, and without waiting any longer Bertie trotted off for the farm.

The next morning when he reached Woodlawn, he found that the sills were in their places on the nice granite underpinning, the floor timbers laid, and boards put across for the carpenters to walk on. Mr. Allen and Joseph were just fastening the tenon of one of the corner posts into the mortise made in the sill. When he saw Bertie jump from his donkey and run toward the house, he exclaimed, —

"This is fun!"

Mr. Fuller, with another man, was

putting up the post in the opposite corner, while others were fastening in the joist or shorter timbers, which rose from the sill once in a foot from one post to another.

By and by papa and mamma and Winnie, drove up in the carriage, where they sat for a time looking at the men running here and there. By noon, the whole of the first story was raised, the floor timbers of the second story laid, and the men were beginning to nail it down.

Just before he left Woodlawn, Mr.

Curtis called one of the Irishmen to hold the horses while he went nearer the house for a moment. There was some trouble in driving one of the tenons into its place, and the man, greatly flurried, began to swear. The Squire turned quickly to the master builder, to see whether he would reprove him, and was delighted to hear him say, in the most quiet tone, —

"I guess we wont have any of that."

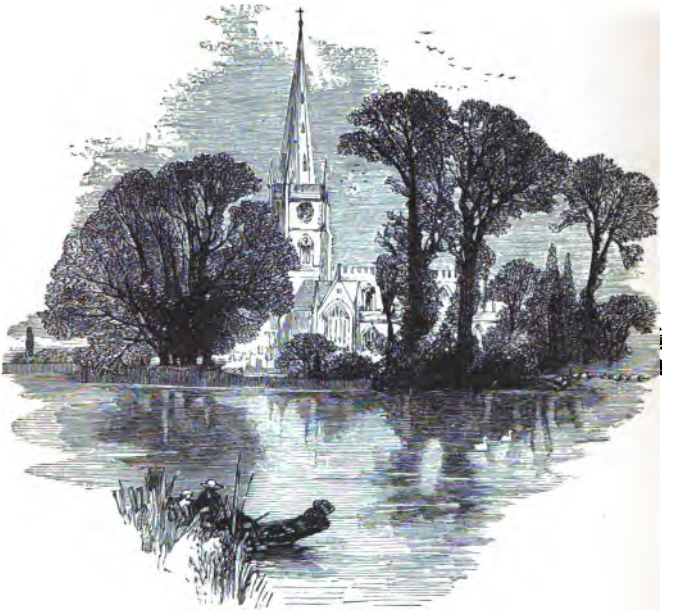
Before night, almost half the male inhabitants of Oxford had gathered around the spot.

"There has never been such a raising here before," exclaimed Farmer Taylor, looking on with the greatest interest. "In my day, when any house was raised, all the neighbors far and near gathered to help, and I am sorry to have to confess it, half a barrel of rum was drank. Now, since the abominable habit of drinking to excess is done away, there is generally a spree of some kind, and hallooing enough to be heard half a mile."

When the men left their work at night, the new house at Woodlawn

could be seen all over the village. Bertie begged so hard, that papa allowed him to go up the rough ladder used by the men, to view the lovely prospect. "Oh, oh!" he exclaimed, "there is the church across the lake; how beautifully it does look!"

As Mrs. Curtis had said, they needed no turrets nor towers from which to view the surrounding country; the whole building was like a city set on a hill which cannot be hid. She did not retire to her rest after that first view of her new home,



until she and her husband had implored the blessing of their heavenly Father to rest upon them there; and that from its walls an influence for good might be diffused all over the town.

CHAPTER IX.

BERTIE'S DISAPPOINTMENT.

HE day of the raising had been an exciting one for Bertie, and even in his dreams he could see Joseph mounted on the high timber, called the plate, which, like the sill at the bottom, fastened the whole timbers together at the top; and the fear that his favorite carpenter would make a misstep, and

fall, rendered his sleep very unrefreshing.

He rose early, longing to know what the carpenters would do next; but looked so pale and worn, that his mamma would not allow him to leave the house.

It was a terrible disappointment; but he tried to yield without murmuring. All the morning, until Winnie's nap, he spent in cutting paper dolls, and then his head ached so badly, he too was glad to lie down.

From his father, he heard that the

carpenters were boarding the house, and that some brick-masons had come out from the city, who were building piers in the cellar for the centre of the house to rest upon.

The next day was rainy, so that it was fortunate the men could work under shelter.

On the third day after the raising, Bertie was delighted to visit Woodlawn. He was greatly surprised to find how rapidly the work had gone on. The frame was entirely enclosed with boards, and the timbers, mark

ing the partitions for the different rooms, were in their places.

Mr. Curtis took Bertie's hand and led him around from room to room, showing him the beautiful prospect from the windows, places for which had been left in the boarding.

All the forenoon, loads of slate for the roof, brick for the chimneys, lime, sand and hair, for the plastering, were arriving on the lawn, which now, instead of being fresh and green, was littered with chips, fragments of stone, and rubbish.

So far, the men had been obliged to climb from the first to the second and third stories on a ladder; but to-day the stair-makers came, and put up the rough frame of steps, which they covered with pieces of board, upon which the men could walk more easily.

"What shall you do to-morrow, Mr. Boss?" asked Bertie, as he and his father stood with Mr. Fuller before they went to the farm.

Both the gentlemen laughed.

"Where did you pick up that

name, my son?" asked his father, greatly amused.

"Joe said it wasn't a wicked word," Bertie answered, blushing crimson "He said Mr. Fuller was boss, and he is going to be boss when he's a man."

"I have no objection to the name," said the master-builder, laughing merrily, "to-morrow we shall get out the window-frames. We are almost ready for the masons."

"What will they do, sir?"

"They are building chimneys now, but they will leave that for the back

plastering, as it is called—do you know what that is?"

"I will explain about that by and by," said papa.

Just as they were leaving Woodlawn, they saw Tom coming up the avenue with a large load of wooden blocks, for which Mr. Fuller had sent him to the depot, three miles distant.

"What are those for?" asked Bertie, as his father and Mr. Fuller stopped to examine the nice square pieces of wood.

"They're for the outside of the house," the builder answered. "Your papa prefers them to clapboards, like what are on the farm-house where you board. They make a handsome finish."

"And how long will it take to put them on, sir?"

"Two or three days, with our men. Your friend, Joe, though the youngest carpenter I have, is the best about nice work like this. If I were obliged to be absent a day in the city, I should make him boss in my place."

Bertie's eyes sparkled with pleasure.

"Thank you, sir," he said. "I know he would like it."

The next day, Bertie was greatly amused to see Joe and his father at work outside, nailing on the blocks, which were arranged like wide bricks alternating every row, as bricks are laid in a wall, or house. The rest of the men were fitting in the window-frames, which, like the blocks, had been sawn out at the factory.

The next day there was a terrible

thunder shower, which drove all the men inside; but, instead of sitting idle, they went to work putting up the framing and partitions around the chimneys, and for the closets.

The little boy could tell now where his chamber would be, just the other side of the bath-room from his mother's. He explained to Joe which was the parlor and which the library; and where the room was in which they should stay the most of the time; and Joe agreed with him that his mamma was famous for planning houses.

One morning, he jumped off his donkey in great haste, and ran to the side of the building where Joe was still at work nailing on the blocks of wood.

"Shall you work at that all day?" he asked, eagerly.

"Oh, yes! and a good many days beside This is a slow job."

"I wanted to know because my mamma and I are going to see a sick man. Mamma is going to try and make him leave off being a drunk ard."

"I wish you good luck," said Mr. Allen. "What is the man's name?"

Bertie blushed. "I'm afraid I ought not to tell you," he answered. "If he does become a good man, he wouldn't want you to know. Alick says he has a good wife; and I guess Alick likes his daughter pretty well. He talks ever so much about her."

"Oh, that's it! Well," said Joe, "I wouldn't marry a drunkard's daughter."

"But if the man became very good and promised not to drink any more

rum or whiskey, then you would," urged Bertie, anxiously.

"She'd have to be an uncommon nice girl, though," Joe insisted, his eyes dancing with fun.

"If I ever have a wife, I want her to be just like mamma," exclaimed the boy, eagerly; "but I sha'n't have one for a good many years."

He drew himself up with such an air, that both Joe and his father shouted with mirth.

CHAPTER X.

THE STONE-MASON.

IF you have read the first book about Bertie, you will remember that Jerrold, the stone-mason, was dismissed on account of his intemperance; but that Mr. Curtis promised Tom to take him back on condition he would reform his habits.

Since that time they had heard that Jerrold, instead of trying to improve, had grown worse and worse, scarcely remaining sober an hour, if he could get liquor to drink.

Tom Grant, who lived a near neighbor, went again and again to his humble cottage, to plead with the poor man not to destroy himself. But he never found him in a condition to understand what was said to him. Either he was in a heavy stupor occasioned by the rum, or he was in a furious state, tearing about the house,

breaking the dishes, or trying to destroy everything within his reach.

All this time his poor wife and children were suffering for fear of their lives. If it had not been for Alick, who was soon to marry Jerrold's daughter, they would have suffered for want of food. But Alick was very good to them. You remember he tried to persuade the Squire not to dismiss Jerrold; and now that the family were in distress, he would not leave them, although he might have had a much better

home with Mr. Grant, at a less price. On the morning when Bertie hurried to Woodlawn, a message had come from Alick that Jerrold was very sick, and begging Mrs. Curtis to come and see him.

By this time it was well known through all the village that the lady delighted in doing good. Indeed there were few houses containing the sick or suffering, which she had not visited; and where her name was not mentioned with gratitude.

Not for one instant did she hesitate

tc answer the summons to Jerrold's distressed family. Bertie was just driving from the door on his morning visit to the new house, when Nancy called him back to say that his mamma wished him to drive her to the farther part of the village.

"You will just have time," the lady said, "to ride to Woodlawn for fifteen minutes, before I shall be ready."

While he was gone, she learned from Mrs. Taylor that Jerrold was suffering from an attack of delirium

tremens, occasioned by hard drinking, and that a physician who had been summoned from another town was fearful he could not recover.

When Mrs. Curtis and her son reached the cottage, they saw a young girl washing at a bench outside the door. Her face was pale and thin; but they could see that if she were happy she would be very pretty.

Her voice too, was soft and sweet when she came forward to meet her visitors; but the tears gushed from

her eyes when the lady asked kindly for her father.

"Dr. Brown has just been here," she answered, putting her apron to her face. "He thinks father cannot live the day out. It's dreadful to have him die so, and when I think how kind he was before" —

Her sobs prevented her finishing the sentence.

"Shall I go in?" asked Mrs. Curtis.

"If you will, ma'am. He's quiet now."

Everything in the room showed that want and suffering were not strangers to the inhabitants. But the few articles of furniture were as clean as hands could make them. Even the sheet that lay over the poor man, though coarse as could well be, was white as snow.

On a stool by the side of the bed, sat a woman, who in her youth, must have possessed remarkable beauty. Even now, her delicate features and abundant brown hair, looked out of place by the side of that wreck of a

man whom she was so tenderly watching. But the cheeks were pale, and the eyes sunken. She looked like, what she was, a drunkard's wife, care-worn and almost heart-broken. A little flush tinged her pale cheek for one instant, as she saw who her daughter was leading into the room. She rose from her humble seat, and moved it toward the visitor.

"He's just gone," she said, in a hoarse whisper.

"Is he conscious?"

"I do not know. He is too weak to answer questions."

"Let us hope," said the lady. "Hope as long as there is life."

The poor wife shook her head, but presently spoke in a suppressed tone.

"Hope that he would give up the intoxicating cup has kept me alive for years. He was not always so, ma'am. He was once the kindest, most indulgent husband a woman ever had. When I was married, I little thought it would ever come to this."

There was a faint, very faint groan from the bed.

Mrs. Jerrold started forward and bent over the prostrate form. Mrs. Curtis could see how she still loved the wretched man.

"Water," he gasped, in a whisper.

The woman clasped her hands. "Oh!" she exclaimed, with a reverent glance upward, "how thankful I am. It was always a call for whiskey, before."

"I have brought some nice tea

ready drawn. Couldn't he take a sip of that?" asked Mrs. Curtis.

They held a cup of tea to his lips, and he eagerly swallowed a few mouthfuls, falling back wholly exhausted.

The poor wife wiped the drops from his face, while tears streamed down her cheeks. She seemed utterly heart-broken. At last she turned to her visitor, and said in a passionate tone, —

"Oh, if he must die, do pray that God may give him time to repent!"

Mrs. Curtis approached to the side of the bed and offered up a few simple petitions to the Friend who was watching over them all. She asked God to spare the life of the sick man, if it was consistent with his holy will; but if the hour of death was near, to give him repentance for all his sins, and grace to accept the Saviour provided for him.

Then, with a few words to mother and daughter, both of whom had learned upon whom they could lean in the hour of sorrow, she was going

away, when Mary, the daughter, noticed a basket Bertie had brought in from the back of the donkey carriage.

"Mrs. Taylor put up some food," Mrs. Curtis explained, "knowing you could not have time to cook much. If he revives again, give him nourishment as often as he can bear it, and keep up hope. He seems very weak, certainly, but not like a dying man."

"Oh, if he might be spared!" groaned the wife, clasping her hands to her breast.

"God is able to do it," said the lady; "he loves importunate prayer, especially for the souls of those who are dear to us."

CHAPTER XI.

THE SYMPATHIZING FRIENDS.

THE following morning Alick brought word that, contrary to all their expectations, Mr. Jerrold was still living, and had several times called for tea, which suited him better than anything he had taken. He said Mrs. Jerrold and Mary were very grateful for the

lady's visit, and already were beginning to hope for his recovery.

"It's astonishing to me," Alick said to the Squire, "how they can grieve so over a man who has been nothing but a torment to them for years; but you'd think to hear them talk last night, he had been a pattern husband."

"If the wife and daughter love him so much," answered Mr. Curtis, seriously, "it only shows us what the love of our Saviour is. His heart yearns over that poor, besotted

wretch, for whom he has shed his blood, and he is ready to save him even at the eleventh hour."

When Alick went home at noon, he repeated the Squire's remark, which had made a great impression on him, at the side of the bed. He had no idea that the sick man could hear, or would understand. He was almost frightened, when Jerrold opened his eyes, and whispered, —

"Say — that — a — gain."

In the afternoon both Mr. and Mrs. Curtis visited the cottage, and

talked of the different methods by which our heavenly Father brings his creatures to a knowledge of his love. Sometimes by laying them on a bed of sickness, and again by prosperity.

Jerrold lay with his eyes closed; but every now and then a groan would escape his lips.

Before he left, the Squire knelt by the bed, and asked God to touch the heart of the sick man with a sense of his goodness in prolonging his life, and prayed that he might be

enabled to make a right use of the moments that were now passing.

Mrs. Curtis then called Mary to the door, and put into her hand two bills of ten dollars each.

"There are a great many expenses in sickness," she said, as Mary objected to taking such a present. "I think there are happier days before you. When your father is able to bear it, he must have nourishing food. Mrs. Taylor is making some chicken broth to-day, and Bertie will ask Alick to take it to him.

Mary's lip quivered. She had no words to answer; but the lady knew she was not ungrateful.

A day or two later, to Bertie's surprise, he one morning found, on entering the new house, that neither Joe, nor his father, nor any of the carpenters were there. Up in the third story were some men whom he had seen at work on the chimneys; but I shall tell you about the masons in another book.

He went carefully down the stairs and out on the lawn. Over by the

barn cellar he heard voices, and presently saw his papa and Mr. Fuller coming toward him.

"Where are all the men?" he asked, running to meet them.

"Framing the barn," was papa's answer.

"I thought," continued Bertie in surprise, "that there was a great deal more to do on the house, before they made the barn."

"Did you?" asked papa, laughing.

"Yes, sir, I don't see any doors or

windows; and all those slates must be put on; and a great many other things done."

"Certainly, my dear; but the doors and windows are already making at the factory. The Corinthian pillars for the piazzas, and the finish around the plaster is made by machinery, too. Mr. Fuller says the finish for the coving and the brackets will come to-morrow; but we must wait a little for the plasterers to work."

"What is coving, papa?"

"It is where the roof projects over the main building. The old way was not to have it project at all. Now they make a coving, and trim it with brackets, turned at the mill, which is a great improvement, in my opinion."

"Shall you finish the barn first?" inquired Bertie, not quite satisfied to have the house left by the carpenters.

"I shall begin to think you are equal to my boy in asking questions," said Mr. Fuller, laughing.

"It is fine weather now," ex-

plained his papa, "and Mr. Boss, as you call him, thinks it wise to improve it in getting the frame to the barn up and boarded in; then the carpenters can work without interruption when it rains."

"Oh, yes, sir! I understand now. That's a good plan."

CHAPTER XII.

BERTIE'S TALK WITH JOE.

AS it is my intention to write about Bertie and the masons, I shall omit here giving an account of their work in the house, and go on to the time when the plastering was dry, and the carpenters went back to finish up their job.

Some days before, the loads of fin-

ishing boards, doors and windows already glazed, had arrived, and were nicely packed away where they would be safe from injury. The blinds were hung though not painted, but in this summer weather they were sufficient protection from the rain.

Bertie went to Woodlawn one morning and wandered about the rooms, until he found Joe and his father. If he had known Joe all his life he could not have felt better acquainted. During all these weeks the young carpenter had been learn-

ing lessons from the child; lessons of truth, honor and integrity.

At first, it had been a puzzle to Joe why Bertie was so unlike many other children he had known. Sometimes he had thought it was the boy's manners, always refined and gentle. Then he said to himself, "No, it is Bertie's bright, beaming face, and his deep blue eyes, with their long, curling lashes, that make him so interesting;" and again he told his father that Bertie was the most frank, cordial little fellow he ever saw.

Mr. Allen agreed to all this; but one day, when they were resting a few moments after dinner, and had been talking about the Squire's family, he said suddenly, —

"There's a principle about that boy, Bertie, that I never saw in any child of his age."

"What do you mean?" asked Joe, wondering.

"I mean that he's got the root of the matter in him. There's plenty of people in the world who can *talk* religion, but the Squire's family seem

to *live* it. I've never seen a jollier gentleman than the Squire. He has a smile and pleasant word for every body; but he does contrive in the cutest way, to give you a thrust when you least expect it."

"Ah, has he hit you, father?" Joe didn't laugh as usual.

"Yes, he'd been telling me how much pleased he was with my work; and he thanked me for my kindness to his son. That took me all aback; and I told him I never had looked at it in that light. It was the boy who

was very civil and kind to us. Then he said, —

"'I'm glad to see you so constant at church since you've been out here.' 'Yes,' I told him, 'I always was brought up to keep the Sabbath day.'"

"'Then I hope you love the worship of God,' he exclaimed, cordially taking my hand. 'He is a good Master and well rewards those who love and serve him.'"

With anybody else, I shouldn't have felt called upon to confess that

while I kept the law outwardly, I had never given my heart to God; but with his keen eyes looking so kindly into mine, I hadn't the face to deceive him, so I answered him truly, —

"'Squire,' says I, 'my wife, who's in heaven these four years, was a Bible Christian. I'm not like her now; but it's my prayer that I may be; and that her son may grow up as good a man as she wanted him to be.'

"'God never refuses a sincere cry

for help to obey his will,' he answered; and that was all. Now, Joe, that short sermon of Squire Curtis', did me more good than a sermon twelve hours long. I knew he meant it; and I knew he lived religion. I never felt more resolved to live as your mother wanted me to, than since I felt the warm grip of his hand."

Joe sat all this time, whittling a stick. "I guess he's about right," he said, sighing; and then he got up and walked away, whistling as usual.

The night before this, he had not slept as well as usual. In the midst of his dreams he started up, thinking he heard Bertie's voice, saying, as he had done the previous day:

"I shall be so sorry when you're through your job and go away, Joe. I like you ever so much. I told mamma you didn't say any bad words, and that you didn't smoke all the time, as those Irishmen do. And then, when I saw you at church, I was sure you loved God. Don't you, Joe? Don't you love him?"

What would not the young carpenter have given at that moment, if he could but truthfully have made answer:

"Yes, Bertie, I love God with all my heart." This was how he had promised his dying mother to love his Creator, and she had died happy, trusting he would keep his word.

As I told you, Bertie wandered around till he found his favorites. He always knew they would be glad to see him; and now he stood and watched them as they nailed on the

pilasters at the side of the doors, and put on the heavy mouldings.

"I don't like to see the nails," he said, when Joe exclaimed: "That door is done, now!"

"Oh, the nails will be covered with putty," explained Mr. Allen. "You'll never see one of them when it is nicely painted."

In mamma's room, the finish was all made of a kind of wood, called satin wood. The doors and window-frames being of the same beautiful material.

This was so nice a job, that Mr. Fuller resolved to put it up himself, allowing no one but Joe to help him. Mamma had told Bertie that a new set of furniture had been ordered, and was now being made in the city, to match the room.

CHAPTER XIII.

SIGNING THE PLEDGE.

FTER watching Joe for an hour, Bertie thought he would go and find Alick, and inquire how Mr. Jerrold was this morning. He had promised his mamma that he would find out whether the sick man relished the fresh eggs they had sent him; and if

he did, they were going to carry him more.

But as he walked slowly down the stairs, he could not help wondering whether Joe was going to be sick. He was very kind, kinder even than usual; but he did not laugh and throw back his black curls, and look in your face archly, with his merry eyes.

"If mamma saw him she'd know what was the matter," Bertie said to himself, walking on, picking his way over the masons' boards and the

pieces of timber. "I wish mamma could see him."

Alick gave a very favorable account of Mr. Jerrold. He had begun to sit up, and was gaining strength every day. He did not talk much; "But I do believe," exclaimed the man, earnestly, "that if your blessed mother were to write out a pledge and ask him to sign it, he would do it. Mary, and her mother, too, think there's nobody out of heaven, quite equal to Squire Curtis' wife."

Bertie laughed and clapped his

hands with delight. Nothing pleased him better than to have people find out how good his mamma was.

"We're going there, this afternoon, and I know she'll ask him," he shouted, earnestly. "Then, if Jerrold gets well he can work with you again. Papa says it will take a long time to finish the stone-mason's job."

"If Jerrold does become a sober man," added Alick, striking his hard hand on the wall, "it'll be the making of his whole family. They wouldn't have to live in that old,

tumbled-down place more'n one year. Oh, Master Bertie! the people that make and sell rum and whiskey to such persons, have a deal to answer for."

After talking awhile with Alick, Bertie went back to the house. Outside, near the top, men were nailing on the ornamental brackets, while others were putting on the tin pipes, through which the water would run from the gutters on the roof, into the large brick cistern, in the cellar. Just as he was going up stairs, he

heard Tom's voice shouting to the oxen, and there he was, coming up to the door, with six large, fluted columns, for the piazza.

Mr. Fuller came down stairs to help unload the pillars, which were very costly.

"I hope the carved capitals are well packed," he said, looking over the side of the cart.

"If you mean those things in the box, I reckon they're all safe," answered Tom.

"Ay! ay! so they are!"

Mr. Fuller called two men, and the columns were carried into the front parlor, until the piazza floors were finished. The floors were to be of hard pine boards, which, when well oiled, looked very handsome. The kitchen floor was of the same material, and also the top of a long table, which was built there with shelves in closets underneath.

"Is that all you have to do before the carpenter work is finished?" asked Bertie.

"We are getting nearly through.

When the knobs and locks are put on the doors, and the hooks are screwed on the wood bands in the closets, the men will have done travelling over the stairs; and we shall nail down the handsome black walnut treads."

"What are treads, sir?"

"The place where we step is called a tread, the other part is called a riser, the part that projects over, and is grooved, is called the nose."

"Oh!" exclaimed Bertie, laughing, "that is too funny. Do you

think it will all be done to-morrow night, sir?"

"Yes, I think it will," answered Mr. Fuller, after a moment's thought

"And then you will finish the barn?"

"Yes, and the hennery, and the conservatory."

"Oh, then you will be here a good while longer? I'm so — so glad!" and he ran up stairs to tell Joe.

"I'm going, at three o'clock, to drive mamma to Mr. Jerrold's house," he said. "I mean, I'm almost sure I

shall go, for something splendid is going to happen there."

"I can guess what," said Joe, smiling. "Your mamma is going to persuade him to give up drinking. Well, I wish she"—

He stopped suddenly, blushing and looking much confused.

"What do you wish?" asked Bertie, pressing up closer to him.

"No matter! I can't tell you now."

He looked so sad, that the boy wondered again whether he were going to be sick; but presently, Joe,

seeing Bertie stand gazing after him, began to whistle a lively tune.

He went away and jumped on Whitefoot's back, resolving to ask his mamma what it could mean.

When they reached Mr. Jerrold's house, in the afternoon, they found Alick had been home with the mes sage. The sick man was sitting in a rocking chair, Tom Grant's old moth- er had lent him. He was not dressed in a coat, but had on a very white shirt, and was shaved very clean.

Mrs. Curtis brought him some nice

sago pudding, with cream and sugar over it, and sat watching the man while he ate it; then she said, with a smile, —

"Mr. Jerrold, I have a favor to ask of you."

"Anything, ma'am. Anything that it is in my power to do."

"You have no power of yourself to keep the promise I want you to make," she answered, in a serious voice; "but if you ask help of your Father in heaven, he will surely give it to you."

"I am ready," he said, his face growing very pale. "Ever since the night you prayed by my bed, I've wanted to sign a pledge never to taste liquor again. I've asked my wife and children to forgive all the trouble I've brought upon 'em, and now, God helping me, I mean to be a man once more."

Mrs. Curtis drew the sheet of paper from her pocket, and placed it before him. Mary ran, amid smiles and tears, to bring pen and ink, while Mrs. Jerrold stood near, her

hand laid lightly on her husband's arm.

"All the past is forgotten, now," she whispered. "From to-day we'll begin anew."